

From: Sonic.net Support [request@sonic.sonic.net]
Sent: Tuesday, January 25, 2005 6:44 PM
To: circles@sonic.net
Subject: Sonic.net asks for your assistance

As an Internet Service Provider, Sonic.net used to operate without much requirement for input from regulatory bodies. However, in recent years, we've found that the changing telecommunications landscape as it relates to Internet access is demanding regular participation.

There is a regulatory item which is underway at the Federal Communications Commission which could badly damage independent ISPs, and we're hoping that you would be willing to participate by sending online comments via the FCC website. The deadline for filing reply comments is this Friday, at 9PM Pacific.

BellSouth has filed a petition at the FCC, asking the FCC to stop regulating broadband service.

If this petition is granted, this would mean that the large phone companies would no longer be subject to regulatory review of their broadband pricing to independent ISPs like Sonic.net. As a result, we would have to individually negotiate pricing and the ability to interconnect, which would undoubtedly raise our prices, and yours in the long term.

The more serious threat is that it is even possible that the phone companies could, in the long run, refuse to provide the necessary connections for our DSL service, and we would be unable to sell DSL at all.

BellSouth's claim is that because their own affiliated ISP service (which is similar to SBC/Yahoo here in California) already controls a huge majority of the market, so squashing the rest of the competition isn't likely to impact the market much.

Considering that you as customers and Sonic.net as an ISP are the folks who might get squashed, I think we all need to speak up!

While BellSouth doesn't serve California, Verizon and Qwest have followed up and filed similar requests, and we could expect SBC to follow suit. We very much value SBC and SBC-ASI as partners in providing DSL service to California consumers, but we are concerned that if they were not required to provide access to all ISPs, independent ISPs and Sonic.net and our customers could suffer badly.

This is not a near term threat - Sonic.net has contractual agreements with SBC which allow us to sell DSL for a long time to come - but this is a long term potential threat which requires a near-term response. We need to tell the FCC that the companies which built the Internet itself should not be wiped away and replaced by the large telephone monopolies.

The FCC is accepting comments on this petition and I would very much appreciate your support in filing comments. Our goal is to ask you as consumers to explain why you value obtaining Internet service from an independent ISP such as Sonic.net, and why BellSouth's request would

badly affect consumers with regards to your available choice of Internet Service for broadband.

You may provide brief comments via a web form, or write a longer comment if you wish as a document which you can upload. Here's the URL for comments:

http://gullfoss2.fcc.gov/prod/ecfs/upload_v2.cgi

You MUST note the Proceeding: 04-405 in the first box, and please select document type: "Reply to comments" from the drop box in the lower right (item 12).

You can then either upload a pre-written document, or you can enter and submit brief free-form comments at the bottom. It just takes a few minutes if you choose to type your comments into the page.

Thank you for your support!

For further discussions on this topic, please see the discussion group at <news://news.sonic.net/sonic.general>

For a full copy of the BellSouth petition, Sonic.net's initial response, the response of the California ISP Association and response of the the National Internet Alliance please see:

<http://www.sonic.net/whatsnew/fcc/>

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Dane Jasper
(707) 522-1000

<mailto:support@sonic.net>

Sonic.net, Inc.

<http://www.sonic.net/>